



Shabbat Shalom

28 Elul 5775
September 12, 2015

Parashat Nitzavim

This Week at Beth El Synagogue

Saturday, September 12:

Havdalah—8:09 pm

Shabbat Mishnah Study	8:45 am
Orthodox Kehillah Services,	9:00 am
B'nai Mitzvah Peer Tutoring	9:00 am
Main Sanctuary Services	9:30 am

Sunday, September 13 (Erev Rosh HaShanah):

Weekly Sunday Minyan	9:30 am
Erev Rosh HaShanah Services	7:00 pm
Erev Rosh HaShanah Orthodox Kehillah Services	7:15 pm

Monday, September 14 (Rosh HaShanah Day 1):

Rosh HaShanah Services 1st Day	8:30 am
Rosh HaShanah Day 1 Orthodox Kehillah Services	8:30 am
Rosh HaShanah Children's Services	10:30 am
Tashlich in Chapel Hill	4:30 pm
Tashlich in Durham	5:30 pm
2nd Day Erev Rosh HaShanah Services	8:00 pm

Tuesday, September 15:

Rosh HaShanah Services 2nd Day	8:30 am
Rosh HaShanah Day 2 Orthodox Kehillah Services	8:30 am
Rosh HaShanah Children's Services	10:30 am

Wednesday, September 16:

Wednesday Morning Minyan and Class	8:00 am
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Thursday, September 17:

Friday, September 18:

Candle Lighting—7:00 pm

Please note that Sunday minyan and Midrash with Rabbi Sager will resume in the coming weeks. Please check your e-notice for more details.

This weekend's Kiddush lunch is sponsored by:

Sharon & Ed Halperin, Martha Hauptman, Carol & Jimmie Haynes, Joy & John Kasson, Stan & Diana Levy, and Anne & William Pizer

Beth El Synagogue

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www.betheldurham.org

Rabbi: Daniel Greyber

Rabbi Emeritus: Steven Sager

Synagogue President: Rachel Galanter

Upcoming Events:

- ✧ Sat. 9/19 Shabbat Mishnah Study
- ✧ Sat. 9/19 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Services
- ✧ Sat 9/19 B'nai Mitzvah Peer Tutoring
- ✧ Sat. 9/19 Shabbat Morning Services, Dvar torah given by Laura Lieber
- ✧ Sat. 9/19 Healing Yoga
- ✧ Sat. 9.19 Monthly Parsha Study
- ✧ Sun. 9/20 Weekly Sunday Minyan
- ✧ Sun. 9/20 First Day of Talmud Torah
- ✧ Sun. 9/20 Hebrew Level I and Level II with Donna Goldstein
- ✧ Sun. 9/20 Kitah Zayin Field trip to the Cemetery
- ✧ Sun. 9/20 Tutor Refresh Session
- ✧ Mon. 9/21 Sisterhood Board Meeting
- ✧ Mon. 9/21 Midrash with Rabbi Sager
- ✧ Tue. 9/22 Pre Fast Dinner
- ✧ Tue. 9/22 Kol Nidre
- ✧ Tue. 9/22 Yom Kippur Eve Orthodox Kehillah
- ✧ We. 9/23 Yom Kippur Orthodox Kehillah Services
- ✧ Wed. 9/23 Yom Kippur Services
- ✧ Wed. 9/23 Yom Kippur Children's Services
- ✧ Wed. 9/23 Study with Rabbi Greyber
- ✧ Wed. 9/23 Mincha

Gabbai Schedule

Contact the scheduled gabbai if you'd like to request an *aliyah*, other honor, or to volunteer to lead a service in the Main Sanctuary. Gabbaim will try to accommodate requests made on Shabbat morning (by 10:15am, before the Torah service) but we ask for your understanding if all honors have been previously claimed during the week.



9/12 Nitzavim	
David Kirsch	
dkirsch@dm.duke.edu	919-286-4516

9/19 Vayeilech Shuva	
Roger Perilstein	
rperilstein@hrc-pa.com	919-286-9814

9/26 Haazinu	
Sally Laliberte	
selalib@gmail.com	919-302-0035

Parashat Nitzavim

Adapted from <http://www.uscj.org/>

Every Israelite gathers to hear Moses's closing words. They are told that they have an equal share in God's covenant with their ancestors before them. They also are warned once again about the punishments they will endure if they worship idols. Still, God will reward those who repent. God reminds the Israelites that the laws are not remote, theoretical concepts, but ideas that are attainable for all.

Theme #1: Piece of My Heart

Then the Lord your God will open up your heart and the hearts of your offspring to love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul, in order that you may live. (Deuteronomy 30:6)

The same God that hardens enemies' hearts will open Israelite hearts in order to bless the people.

What did the Holy One, blessed be He, speak to Moses? That if they would repent while in any of the kingdoms where they might be [exiled], the Holy One, blessed be He, would gather them together; as it says ... "and the Lord your God will circumcise your heart." -- Numbers Rabbah

Some people find this reference [in the second paragraph of the Grace After Meals] to circumcision (the covenant which God has "sealed in our flesh") exclusionary. Therefore, some substitute "in our hearts" for "in our flesh." -- from the Mizmor Shir Birkon

In prayer, which the rabbis call "the service of the heart," tradition places as much emphasis on one's intention, "kavvanat ha-lev," the directing of the heart, as it does on the recitation of the words. This idea is one of the central beliefs of Hasidism. -- Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols

Questions for Discussion:

Numbers Rabbah holds that even if we are outside of Israel, if we take our Jewish heritage seriously, we will gravitate toward each other even in a foreign land, thereby placing us in a position of strength. What are some examples of Diaspora Jewish communities accomplishing great things when many people work together? Now that Jews are integrated in the general societies of many nations, how must communal organizations shift to focus on today's challenges?

The Mizmor Shir Birkon explains that the reference to circumcision in the Grace After Meals is considered by some as inclusive to males but not females, as only Jewish males are circumcised, so there is a custom to borrow a phrase from today's Torah portion. To what extent do we have a responsibility to create gender-inclusive language in Jewish prayers? Should we be cautious about changing prayers that have existed in the same form for hundreds of years? Or do modern sensibilities outweigh our affection for tradition in these cases?

Frankel and Teutsch tell us that the ancient expression for mental concentration involved references to the heart, not the mind. Today, we typically refer to the brain as the seat of rational thought and the heart as the seat of emotions. Does the ancient emphasis on the heart make more sense? Is there some benefit to considering the heart in a metaphorical sense, not just as an organ that pumps blood to the rest of our bodies?

Theme #2: Locally Produced

Surely, this Instruction which I enjoin upon you this day is not too baffling for you, nor is it beyond reach. It is not in the heavens, that you should say, "Who among us can go up to the heavens and get it for us and impart it to us, that we may observe it?" (Deuteronomy 30:11-12)

This famous statement has empowered many Jewish scholars to add their insights to our understanding of Torah.

When we are told that the Torah is not in the heavens, we are to understand that it is not found among the astrologers. -- Deuteronomy Rabbah

"It is not in heaven". Moses said to them, "Do not say, 'Another Moses will arise and bring us another Torah from heaven,' for I say to you, 'It is not in heaven' -- no part of it has remained in heaven." -- Deuteronomy Rabbah

Rabbi Yohanan said: The words "It is not in heaven". Samuel said, "Torah is not be found among those who are arrogant." "Neither is it beyond the sea" -- it will not be found among merchant princes or petty traders. -- Eruvin 55a

Beth El is a welcoming community of members with diverse backgrounds, ideas, levels of knowledge, and observance. We are an egalitarian Conservative congregation, and a member of the Southeast Seaboard district of United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ), and the Orthodox Union.

Refuah Shleymah רפואה שלמה

Aharon ben David u'Miriam (Alan Goldman)	Reuven ben Chanoch v'Dinah (Robert Feurst)	Lydia Cowan Davis Elinor Fleishman
Aliza Chana bat Leah	Rifka bat Idel v'Elka	Ilene Jacobson
Baracha bat Sarah	Rut bat Sarah (Suzanne Furst)	Anne Krunkosky
Ben-Zion ben Sarah	Sara bat Hinda (Sylvia Dante)	Jennifer Krunkosky
Chana bat Malkah	Sarah Gittel bat Rut (Sue Perlo)	Inez McFarling Ezra Rapport
David ben Avraham v'Sarah (David Weaver)	Sharon bat Aharon v'Devorah (Sharon Halperin)	Jack Reich Pearl Rohde
David ben Sarah (David Leitner)	Shira Batya bat Meirav	Richard Roth
Dovid ben Shayna Etta (David Riceman)	Shmuel Ariyeh ben Karit	Lauren Schiro
Eliezer David ben Feigel (Larry Berger)	Shmuel ben Shoshana	Susan Tolchin
Eliyahu Chanan ben Sarah (Ed Gagnon)	Tziporah bat Esther	Christine Walters
	Yehudit bat Rachel	Orrie Wilner
Gershon Yonah ben Teyva haKohen v'Chanah Leah haLevi	Lee Ballen	Amy Wolf
M'cor Eyschel bat Esther Tzvia	Lucretia Bell	
Miryam bat Rivkah (May Segal)	Sonia Berman	Please contact the synagogue office with any additions or changes to this list.
	Anne Boyd	
Ovadya ben Elinor (Ovadya Fleishman)	Cynthia Brown	

Yahrzeits יארצייט

Sydney Back	Abraham Roskin
Clarence Berman	Lottie Samuel
Rebecca Emenitove	Heinz Speier
Rhea Fishman	Leveritt A. Wallace
Polly Gutman	
Robert Lubovsky	
Sidney "Chick" Mandel	
Roberta Morris	
David Alexander Rosefielde	

BE Babies

Mazel tov to Emily and Ben Hayes on their daughter's, Sloane Jackson (Irina Lior), baby naming!

Mazel tov to Lynne Grossman on the birth of her grandson and Will's namesake, Zachary William Grossman, on September 5 to Anne Wofford and Alec Grossman in Winston-Salem.

BE at Beth El

Beth El welcomes the following returning and new members to our congregation!

Marc Brettler; Rabbi Jerry & Carole Fox; Laslo & Susan Gross; Adam & Rikki Sanogueira and Halleli (3); Craig & Rona Spitzer, Justin (8) and Max (4)